Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTO 04006 212141Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----------019944 221735Z /53
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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASDC 5411

S E C R E T SANTO DOMINGO 4006

EXDIS

EO 11652 XGDS-4
TAGS: PINT, PINS, DR
SUB: GUZMAN PLANS TO CONFRONT DOMINICAN MILITARY

REF: A) SANTO DOMINGO 4000, (B) SANTO DOMINGO 3973, C) SANTO DOMINGO 2643,

1. PRESIDENT-ELECT GUZMAN CALLED EMBOFF AND ASKED HIM TO COME TO HIS HOME LAST EVENING (JULY 20) FOR A GENERAL TALK.

2. MEETING ALONE, GUZMAN TOLD EMBOFF HE WAS AWARE THAT PRESIDENT BALAGUER WOULD NAME MGEN RAFAEL NEIT NIVAR SEIJAS TO THE COMMAND OF THE ARMY'S FIRST BRIDGADE (REF A) AND OTHERWISE WAS CHANGING THE LEADERSHIP OF THE ARMED FORCES. WHAT BALAGUER WAS DOING, HE SAID, WAS PUTTING THE WORST ELEMENTS OF THE MILITARY-HE HAS PRIVATELY SAID MANY TIMES IN THE PAST THAT NEIT NIVAR AND MGEN JUAN RENE BEAUCHAMP JAVIER TOGETHER REPRESENT THE GRAVEST THREAT TO DOMINICAN DEMOCRACY, AND HE REPEATED THIS FORCEFULLY LAST NIGHT-IN POWER POSITIONS ALIGNED AGAINST GUZMAN'S PRESIDENCY. NOT ONLY IS BALAGUER TRYING TO PREEMPT AND FORECLOSE GUZMAN'S RIGHT TO SELECT HIS OWN MILITARY LEADERSHIP, THE PRESIDENT-ELECT CONTINUED, BALAGUER AND HIS HENCHMEN IN THE ARMED FORCES ARE PREPARING TO PROVOKE A CONFRONTATION AT THE OUTSET OF HIS ADMINISTRATION. GUZMAN, A MAN

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WHO HAS LONG HELD A DEEP MISTRUST OF BALAGUER, LISTED THE NEW LAWS THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN RUSHING THROUGH CONGRESS THE PAST WEEK (REF B), AND CONCLUDED THAT BALAGUER IS BEHAVING LIKE A MAN GONE CRAZY. HE LUMPED IN WITH BALAGUER'S PRESENT ACTIONS THE SUCCESSION OF EVENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES AND CONGRESSIONAL DEMANDS, BALAGUER'S JULY 13 SPEECH-AND THE SUPREME COURT RULING AGAINST THE PRD

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

WHICH HAD JUST OCCURRED.

4. GUZMAN SAID THAT ALTHROUGH HE WAS FRIGHTENED BY THE PROSPECT, HE WAS PREPARED FOR THE CONFRONTATION. ASKING EMBOFF TO TREAT WHAT HE WAS ABOUT TO SAY WITH UTMOST CONFI-DENTIALITY, SINCE HE HAD INFORMED NO ONE IN HIS PARTY OF HIS DECISION, GUZMAN SAID ON THE DAY OF HIS INAUGURATION, OR AT THE LATEST THE DAY AFTER, HE WAS GOING TO FIRE NEIT AND BEAUCHAMP, WHO HAS BEEN LEFT IN HIS POSITION AS ARMED FORCES SECRETARY BY BALAGUER. THE PRESIDENTELECT SAID HE IS CONVINCED HE CANNOT LEAVE THESE TWO OFFICERS IN PLACE FOR ANY PERIOD WHATSOVER: IF HE WERE TO ALLOW TIME TO PASS WITHOUT ACTING, THEY WOULD USE IT TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR POSITIONS AND THUS ESTABLISH DECISIVE POWER OVER THE CIVILIAN EXECUTIVE. THIS WILL INEVITABLY PRODUCE A COUP D'35-5 9.358.3 IN THE FUTURE, HE SAID. AN AS EXAMPLE OF THE ATTITUDE OF THESE OFFICERS, GUZMAN SAID THAT EARLY THIS WEEK, WHEN HE FIRST GOT WIND THAT THE "ORGANIC LAW" OF THE MILITARY WAS BEING IMPLEMENTED, HE CALLED BEAUCHAMP AND ASKED TO SEE HIM ON THE MATTER. BEAUCHAMP AGREED TO MEET BUT HAS YET TO CALL HIM BAKCK TO SET A TIME AND PLACE.

5. THE EASON HE WAS COMMUNICATING HIS "FIRST STATE SECRET" TO THE USG, HE SAID, WAS THAT HE WOULD COUNT ON WASHINGTON TO GIVE HIM THE FULLEST MORAL SUPPORT IF HIS ACTION AGAINST NEIT AND BEAUCHAMP PRODUCES A CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS OR IF

THEY REACT WITH VIOLENCE. EMBOFF SAID WASHINGTON WOULD BE INFORMED IMMEDIATELY.

6. COMMMENT: GUZMAN SHOWED HIS CUSTOMARY CALM AND SELF-CONTROL THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSION, BUT ALSO EVIDENT WAS THE DETERMINATION HE FIRST DEMONSTRATED ON THE MORNING OF MAY 17 (REF C), WHEN HE VOWED HE WOULD NOT BE DENIED THE FRUIT OF HIS VICTORY. WHAT HE IS SAYING NOW IS THAT HE CANNOT GOVERN UNLESS HE REMOVES THOSE WHO ARE PREPARED TO FRUSTRATE HIS AUTHORITY AND THAT HE NEEDS ASSURANCES OF STRONG US MORAL BACKING IN CASE THE CRUNCH DEVELOPS. SECRETARY VANCE'S PLANNED PRESENCE AT GUZMAN'S INAUGURATION AUGUST 16 WILL NO DOUBT PROVIDE AN OCCASION FOR GUZMAN RO RAISE THIS MATTER DIRECTLY WITH THE SECRETARY.

7. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT THE EMBASSY BE AUTHORIZED TO TELL GUZMAN THAT THE SECRETARY HAS BEEN INFORMED OF HIS INTENTION AND THAT THE USG CONTINUES UNEQUIVOCALLY TO SUPPORT THE UNIMPEDED CARRING OUT OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS BEGUN WITH THE FREE ELECTIONS OF MAY 16.
YOST

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

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Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

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EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
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